

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 4th FEBRUARY, 1953.

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT

The President, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, **Mr. John Gutch, C.M.G., O.B.E.**

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, **Mr. J. L. Fletcher, O.B.E., T.D. (Acting)**

The Hon. the Attorney General, **Mr. F. W. Holder, Q.C.**

The Hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, **Mr. E. F. McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E.**

The Hon. **Dr. J. A. Nicholson**, (Georgetown North).

The Hon. **J. Roth, O.B.E. (Nominated).**

The Hon. **G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E. (Nominated)**

The Hon. **C. J. Ghlan** (Demerara River).

The Hon. **D. P. Debidi** (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. **J. Fernandes** (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. **Dr. C. Jagan**, (Central Demerara).

The Hon. **A. T. Peters**, (Western Berbice.)

The Hon. **W. A. Phang**, (North Western District).

The Hon. **G. H. Smellie**, (Nominated).

The Hon. **L. A. Luckhoo**, (Nominated).

The Hon. **W. A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E. (Nominated).**

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, the 30th of January, 1953, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

NOTICE

OFFER OF MACE AND TABLE

The President: Hon. Members, as you are aware, provision was included in the 1953 Draft Estimates for the acquisition, subject to Her Majesty's consent, of a Mace for the House of Assembly. I am happy to announce that the Executive Board of Messrs. Bookers Bros., McConnell & Co. Ltd., of London have very generously offered to present a Mace to the Colony. Another generous offer which has been received is that of the gift of a new table, which will be required for the Council Chamber, from Messrs. Willems Timber and Trading Co. Ltd.

The offers are being accepted, and I am sure that hon. Members would wish me to record our grateful appreciation of these gifts.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. Fletcher, Acting): I beg to lay on the table the following—

The Report on the Medical Department of British Guiana for the year 1951.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES

Mr. Debidin I beg to give notice of the following motions:—

NEED FOR CHILD ADOPTION LAW

"Whereas in this Colony there is no law and procedure laid down for the adoption of children and many instances have arisen and will always arise where a person may wish to adopt a child;

"And whereas such a person would merely be putting himself or herself in *loco parentis* towards such child with all legal rights, liabilities and duties of parent towards the child still vested in the true parent;

"And whereas such questions as an adopted child inheriting as of right under the Estate of an adopted parent and so forth can only be provided for by legislation such as obtains in England;

"And whereas similar legislation as exists in England for the adoption of children in this Colony is overdue;

"Be it resolved that this Council request Government to enact an Ordinance to contain similar provisions as the Adoption of Children Act, 1926, (16 & 17 George V Chapter 29) and that a Select Committee be appointed for the purpose of settling the provisions of the said Act or otherwise which should be contained in such Ordinance."

MAINTENANCE OF MORA POINT ROAD

"Whereas there is a high and firm roadway which passes through the Mahaicony Abary Rice Expansion Scheme from North to South and turning West extends right up to the Mahaicony River at Mora Point;

"And whereas during the dry weather motor vehicles can use the said road as they have done in the past;

"And whereas Mora Point is the centre of a very large and growing population in the Mahaicony Creek, approximately 10 miles from the Public Road;

"And whereas the Mahaicony River is a very large rice, cattle and milk producing area and is in the throes of development;

"Be it resolved that this Honourable Council recommend to Government the maintenance of the said road in conjunction with the Rice Development Co. Ltd. for easy and quick communication and access of residents of the Mahaicony Creek."

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

INCOME TAX ON JOINT INCOMES

Mr. Smellie: I beg to give notice of the following questions:—

1.—What is the present legal position in regard to the assessment of income tax on the joint incomes of husband and wife;

(i) in the United Kingdom;

(ii) in Trinidad;

(iii) in British Guiana.

2.—Is there any concession or relief of tax available in the United Kingdom or in Trinidad with respect to the assessment of the joint incomes of husband and wife which is not granted in British Guiana?

ORDER OF THE DAY

CAMPBELLVILLE PLOTS

Mr. Fernandes asked and the Colonial Secretary replied to the following questions:—

Q. 1: When will Government be ready to transport land at Campbellville to Plot Holders?

A. — The prices at which the occupied lots will be re-sold to existing lessees and the conditions of sale have been approved by the Governor-in-Council and action to arrange for the sale and transport of the land to the lot-holders will be taken as quickly as possible.

Q. 2: Is Government aware of the conditions of the streets in Campbellville?

A. — Yes.

Q. 3: If the answer is in the affirmative, what steps does Government propose to remedy the conditions?

A. — The whole of the revenue derived from rents is being allocated to

the estate including the repair of roads and bridges. If necessary, Council will be invited to approve of a supplementary vote from public funds to enable the main road to be reconstructed this year.

CONFISCATED SOVIET LITERATURE

Mr. Fernandes on behalf of **Dr. Jagan** asked and the **Colonial Secretary** replied to the following questions:—

Q. 1—Will Government state whether 222 copies of “Soviet Literature” and 534 copies of “Soviet Woman” which were imported into the Colony from the United Kingdom by **Dr. Cheddi Jagan** and confiscated by the Comptroller of Customs will be sold to the public? If not, will Government state reasons.

A. — The Honourable Member was informed in reply to his question tabled on the 26th September, 1952, that goods confiscated by the Comptroller of Customs for want of proper entry are not all advertised for sale before destruction. Section 188(2) of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 33, which was the Ordinance in force in 1952, provided *inter alia* that all forfeited goods may be sold or otherwise disposed of in such manner as the Comptroller of Customs for want of the usual practice to advertise and sell all forfeited goods except such goods as it is undesirable to make available for purchase by the public. The 222 copies of “Soviet Literature” and 534 copies of “Soviet Woman” were contained in a consignment of books and gramophone records which was illegally imported into British Guiana by the Honourable Member in contravention of the Imports and Exports Order, 1942, and confiscated by the Comptroller of Customs. The consignment was deemed to contain goods undesirable for purchase by the public.

Q. 2—In the event that these books will not be offered for sale, will Government state whether they will be destroyed? If so, by what means?

A. The goods were destroyed by officers of the Department of Customs on the 6th October, 1952. They were burnt.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) BILL, 1953

The Attorney General: I beg to move the first reading of the Bill intituled:—

“An Ordinance further to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance by increasing the maximum penalty that may be inflicted in respect of various offences of cruelty to animals.”

The Colonial Secretary: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

NURSES & MIDWIVES REGISTRATION BILL, 1953

The Attorney General: I beg to move the first reading of the Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to provide for the Registration of Nurses for the sick and for the Registration of Midwives.”

The Colonial Secretary: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL

The next item on the Order Paper was the resumption of consideration in Committee of the Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to provide for the import and export duties of Customs to be imposed upon certain goods imported and exported from the Colony for the importation and exportation of any goods without payment of Customs duty.”

The Attorney General: When the Council last dealt with this Bill it was deferred after the Committee had agreed to my request. I had considered it desirable, in view of the fact that the Select Committee’s recommendations had been accepted by the Council, that opportunity should be given to

"tidying up" the Bill. I am afraid that as a result of the amendments which have been made I am not ready to proceed with the Bill today, but I would like to inform hon. Members that the Comptroller of Customs is now collecting taxes on the basis of the Report of the Select Committee which has been accepted by this Council. I hope to be ready to proceed with the Bill shortly.

1953 APPROPRIATION BILL

Council resumed consideration of the motion for the second reading of a Bill intituled—

"An Ordinance to appropriate supplies granted in the current session of the Legislative Council."

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: In making my Budget address I indicated that it was an act of moving the second reading of the Appropriation Bill. We then went into Finance Committee and have completed the detailed examination of the Draft Estimates, and I have tabled the Report of the Finance Committee. This then is the opportunity that Members have to speak on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill or, in other words, on the Budget and all matters connected therewith. Before I move that we go into Committee of the Council to consider the Report of the Finance Committee and to examine the Bill in detail, I suggest that Members take this opportunity to make any comments they wish, on the Budget as a whole.

The President: Unless any Member wishes to speak on the Budget in general, I take it that we will go into Committee.

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I would like to make a few observations on the Budget Statement of the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer. I have from time to time spoken on the Budget Statement and, so far as I am concerned, I do not feel there is a great

deal to be said except to say that I feel that on this occasion a very favourable picture has been presented to us of the Colony's economy as a whole. The hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has given us the same details of the National Income of the Colony. He quoted the figures which were given to us some years ago by Dr. Benham and has now given us some new figures which are really very good in comparison with those given to us before. Sir, I feel sure that when we get the Report of the Economic Mission of the World Bank which is now in this Colony, we would be in a better position to size up the whole situation. There is no doubt that that is the thing on which we must concentrate a great deal.

I have just come back from visiting various parts of this Colony with the Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Committee, making investigation and also taking evidence, and wherever we went we found the same complaint—the people do not have enough land and what they are cultivating is not yielding as much as it should. In some parts of the country, for instance, in the Mahaicony District, we were told by the farmers that they simply leave their padi in the field because it was not an economic proposition to reap those yields. That was the sad story we heard, not only in the Mahaicony District but in places like Western Berbice. In some cases, where the padi was reaped the yield was very small—6 to 8 bags per acre.

If we are to increase the National Income of this Colony, I feel that a great deal of effort must be made to carry out particularly the drainage and irrigation schemes, one of which we are now embarking upon. That is the Boerasirie Irrigation Scheme. There are other schemes which were investigated by Mr. Hutchison and which will cost a lot of money, and we have been

told that we cannot carry them through at the moment. I note from a statement in your Message, sir, that the Government is to embark upon the Blocks I and II Scheme, Corentyne, now that Block III is completed. But, sir, we have to look at this situation very realistically.

I remember reading Mr. Hutchison's Report on the Boerasirie Scheme in which he mentioned that if all the arable and fertile lands were to be given out on the basis of 25 acres per family within 17 years, taking into consideration the rapid increase in population, all of it would be taken up. That is indeed something on which we must fix our eyes and very seriously at that, if we are to carry through our plans for the schemes at Blocks I, II and III. For instance, in your Message you state, sir, that it was certain that Blocks I and II would provide an additional acreage of 27,000. A few more thousand acres will be obtained in Block III, but if we do not think of carrying out the main Canje scheme which will bring the acreage to about half a million acres, then I think we are wasting money and in the long run the millions now put up for building dams and empoldering the lands would be simply wasted.

It is true it is a stop-gap measure, and possibly the argument is that a little is better than nothing at all, but we have to look at the problem very realistically and see whether or not we are going to alleviate suffering, how many persons are going to be satisfied, and also whether in a few years to come we can stand that expenditure which may otherwise be considered a waste of money. Pumps which have been put into operation will have to be removed. It is true that we may be able to get back some of that money, but as far as I have been made to understand many of the dams which will be built will certainly become obsolete when the main Canje scheme is put through. These are things which

are very important to a growing country such as ours. The salvation of the economy of this Colony, as I see it, is first and foremost the development of our agricultural resources. Having got that and having got the national income increased tremendously from the figures given in 1942 by Dr. Benham, we will then be able to carry out the other schemes which are necessary for the development of this country.

The manufacturing industries which we have heard so much about, and the schemes investigated by Mr. Case, are to be implemented. At the moment, as far as I see it, we are working in a vicious circle. We do not have enough lands properly drained and irrigated and as a result of that, I think, our economy is taking a very serious turn. I have been on the Corentyne, East Demerara and in the Essequibo Islands and have had the same requests everywhere. At one place on the Essequibo Coast evidence was adduced to the Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Committee in the following strain. "The Government must divide up certain areas for pasturage, for dairy as well as beef cattle and give the land out to the people". For a long time we have had sugar as the sheet anchor of the economy of this country and now, apparently, we have gone mad on rice. Rice is growing willy-nilly all over the place.

I think Government ought to give very serious consideration to this matter of planning our agriculture, generally, because we know that sugar and rice are both essential crops. If a man is to make a living out of agriculture, he has to so plan his activities that he would be fully occupied for the greater part of the year. We are not doing that at the moment, and I do not feel that we will be able within the near future to do very much good for the people of this Colony unless we

can do two things—provide employment for those who are unemployed and provide lands for those who want to carry on farming as an occupation

I know that the sum of money which is required for the carrying out of these schemes is really tremendous to our way of thinking — 150 or 160 million dollars. But, sir, when we think of the millions and billions of pounds (sterling.) which Her Majesty's Government is used to sinking and also billions of dollars in which the United States Government is now dealing, I feel that our development — and by that I mean real development — is not really such an alarming proposition after all. I feel, sir, that although the sum may be large, if we can get hold of this money and even if we have to pay interest on it at a fairly equitable rate — say 3 or 4 per cent., or whatever it may be—we should be able to borrow \$150 million and pay interest on it at the rate of 3 per cent., as our revenue would only be taxed to the extent of \$4½ million per annum so far as interest charges are concerned, and we should do so. But, sir, we have also to look at the other side of the picture. We should make lands available to the people for production. At the moment, in some places padi is planted but not reaped because it would not pay the farmer to reap it, and even if it is reaped, the yield is so small that it does not mean anything to the individual who is planting, or does not mean anything to Government who is collecting indirect revenue from those individuals.

Let us take Mr. Hutchinson's figures of 25 acres per family. Let us assume that we are to put all that 25 acres under rice. If we have properly drained and irrigated lands we can get a yield of approximately 20 bags per acre, and 20 bags at the current price of

approximately \$5 per bag for padi, will give roughly \$100 per acre. Therefore, 25 acres will give the farmer a gross income of \$2,500 per annum. That is, indeed, a small figure.

We are told by the experts that the Colony's share of the national income is somewhere in the vicinity of 20%—it is generally higher, and I think it is at the moment somewhere in the vicinity of 26%. If we take 20% of \$2,500 we would find that the Government would get only about \$500, either by direct or indirect taxation from the farmer. At the moment Government gets nothing. Not only that, Government has to pay poor relief to the people who are unemployed and to the farmer who has no lands, and it also has to maintain the many Services which at the moment are necessary and essential if we are to have healthy, economic and full employment of the people. Farmers are not producing enough from the land, and many of the services for which we are spending millions of dollars can be curtailed so as to make it not so expensive for the taxpayers.

For social services, social assistance and poor relief, we are now spending about three-quarter million dollars per annum, and we have, because of unemployment, a serious incidence of crime in this Colony — house-breaking and entering, and what not—resulting in a large Magistracy and more people in the prisons. That is also eating up a great deal of money at the moment. Figures show that it takes \$465 per annum to maintain an individual in prison, and Government is not even paying that much to maintain an individual and his family outside of prison. Such expenditure, I submit, is wasteful in the sense that it can be saved. If we had full employment for the people and adequate provision made for the secur-

ity of farmers, that expenditure would be curtailed.

Take the Medical Services. At the moment, most of the expenditure on Medical Services is on the curative side and not the preventive side. We have just voted a great deal of money for the Tuberculosis Sanatorium. We have built another Ward to accommodate 100 beds and the last report of the Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis states that there are 56 patients outside the institution waiting to be admitted. We all know that tuberculosis is a disease brought about by bad surroundings where people are more prone to contract it easily. As most of us know, we have people living under conditions of overcrowding, and the result is unemployment and the trek of people from the country to the city, because at the moment farming is no longer an occupation in which there is any security. It is a very hazardous occupation at the moment. If the farmer is given an adequate amount of land, properly drained and irrigated, his income will be increased and Government's revenue will be increased also, and much of the expenditure now forming part of the Estimates would be curtailed. That is the way we must look at the development of the country. Any development which is to take place must, in my opinion, take place basically on agriculture. In that way we will be able to pay back our interest and capital charges and no doubt, in the course of time, accumulate enough money for the further industrial development of British Guiana.

If the Colony's development is to be a success—I see it only in one aspect of time, accumulate enough money for our mineral and timber resources—I feel that a great deal of it will have to come from the production of the soil and, in addition, there must be

the material for the setting up of secondary industries. I hope that in the coming year we will be able to get the necessary capital to put through all these major schemes which we have been hearing so much about. I also hope that when the report of the International Bank is submitted to us, we will be told that it is favourably disposed to the granting of loans to us for the carrying out of these major schemes which mean so much to the happiness and well-being not only of the people in this Colony but those of the West Indies and, indeed, of the world in general.

Sir, we know that millions of people are starving today all over the world, particularly in the over-populated areas in the Far East. I think it is criminal to allow people to starve when more food can be produced. We have the means right here in British Guiana, and it is a matter that should be looked into from the point of view of humanitarian services. I have just read the Report of the U.N. Organisation on the food situation. When one reads that report, one cannot but come to the conclusion that it is really an alarming state of affairs. I feel that there is no necessity for this starvation at the moment. I do not believe in the theory of excess population — that so many people must be wiped out either by disease or by war or by birth control. I do not think all these things are necessary. I feel that we are living in a very advanced and scientific age and, if we take the experts' advice I am sure we would be able to solve this very serious problem and lay the basis for a better society of mankind in general.

Mr. Debidin: Sir, our approach to the Budget Statement this year must be quite different from what it was in the past four years. We have now reached a point where we

face the future not so much full of doubt as full of speculation regarding the type of progress British Guiana will inherit. That progress will depend on very many things, and among them is the all-important factor which, to my mind, is the suitability of our new Constitution. By that I mean, Members who will function under it will be capitalising what has been done in the past and what we will be able to do in the future.

We are happy to have had much hope in the past four years, and now again the Budget shows that we have a surplus of nearly one million dollars. That, in itself, speaks for the solvency of British Guiana. In keeping that state of things alive, we have been able to see the development of British Guiana moving apace. I am happy to realize that from the bauxite industry the Colony will inherit substantial revenue in the future, and that from our mineral and timber resources we will also receive a very large income. If rice is put on a sound basis and if, as the Hon. Member for Central Demerara seems to be so concerned, all is well with the producers of rice in this country, I feel sure that the rice industry will provide for British Guiana added national income. And so I feel that what is needed is a stable Government under the new Constitution—a Government which will be able to convince the International Bank Mission which is now in our midst, of the value of the country in such a way that they will assist in its development and bring an even greater measure of national income and revenue to the Colony. When all that is done, I feel that the sons and daughters of British Guiana will inherit future progress and prosperity. That is the way one has to look at it, and in the transitional period we must continue to look at the economic state of British Guiana's affairs.

The hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has referred to his

Budget Statement as a "handing-over" Statement. He is right—quite right. It is a "handing-over" Statement and we should not be too critical of it; as perhaps we have been in the past. It has certain aspects which, taken altogether, are worthy of mention. And if certain very important measures had not been looked after and taken care of, I feel sure that the surplus might not have been as much as it is. On the question of communication, I feel that British Guiana is in need not only for better communication, but even more communication. I refer particularly to that because I wish it to be a point for consideration by the World Bank Mission, since it seems to me that if anything requires more careful consideration by them, it is the question of communication which is so vital for the development of British Guiana. Of course, I expect that they will consider the very big question of drainage and irrigation, and that they will consider also the question of certain industrial developments. As a result of my recent studies, and particularly since my participation in the West Indies Conference in Jamaica last December, I am extremely conscious of the fact that British Guiana cannot depend purely on an agricultural economy. It has to have, side by side with it and to a large extent supporting it, industrial development.

I think the hon. Member for Central Demerara, (Dr. Jagan) referred to the Case Reports. They are necessary stepping-stones for consideration—stepping stones to larger consideration perhaps—but I feel that in British Guiana there are, without going to details, great possibilities for industrial development in more than one direction. I feel sure that a careful study of these matters will reveal the means by which the population in British Guiana, which is increasing very fast and to a large extent most alarmingly, could be absorbed

I trust that not only favourable but quick consideration will be given to the question, whether by way of loan or otherwise from the Bank, but that there will be early implementation of what will be very vitally necessary if this part of the British Empire is to be really developed.

The other part of the Budget about which I shall not be too critical at this stage, relates to the question of loans for agriculture from public funds. I am not quite satisfied that Government could not have done much more, especially when there is a considerable balance, or that the loans to the Co-operative Credit Bank could not have been increased from \$70,000 to \$100,000; and that for Food Production from \$100,000 to \$200,000. I feel that loans for agricultural purposes at this time would be "taken up" in the same way—to use an analogy—as blotting paper takes up ink, since the people are anxious to embark upon agricultural ventures. I feel that I interpret the country's peasantry very well when I say that they are a most enterprising people—a people who are prepared to make every venture possible in the colony's agricultural development. And because of that, I feel that the greatest encouragement ought to be given to them to take up more land for cul-

I do endorse what the hon. Member for Central Demerara has said, and we are happy to see that Sir Charles Woolley has also expressed very strongly the same point—that there is need for a greater agricultural planning economy. There is no question about that. I have always criticized our Agriculture Department for not showing a greater realization of this aspect. I feel that with the enterprise of the people, Government should grant them more loans in order that they

might be better able to reap the required benefits in many districts of the colony. We know that the Loan Bank is being besieged, but there is a limit to such assistance under the Loan Bank Ordinance. Because of the very stringent local requirements of security, the people are automatically debarred from approaching the source to obtain loans.

Further, while it is true that Government has recommended an increase of the total loan relating to Food Production from \$100,000 to \$200,000, I feel that is a Department to which a considerably larger sum should have been granted and made available to the people and so bring more advantage to the Colony. It is something which ought not to be very difficult and even now, at this stage, Government can take up the matter of such an increase. I feel that it is important that there should be a revision of the buying price of foodstuffs in the Colony. Unless that is done a great deal of discouragement will be given to the people and more than that, those who by force of necessity must go in for farming, will suffer loss in their production.

I do trust that those concerned, whether it be the Advisory Committee of the new Rice Development Company or the Rice Marketing Board of British Guiana, would give serious thought to the early revision of prices so as to meet the coming crop which will not find us in this Council. When that crop is reaped and the new prices come into effect, this Council will be out of existence and there will be a new Legislature. Nevertheless, I voice that opinion today in the interest of the people who will reap their crop in the latter part of this year. They are now engaged in actual cultivation, and this is the time, to my mind, when some encouragement should be given to

them by Proclamation as to the prices of rice and padi in the future.

The question of a better price, for their produce seems to me to be the cry of the farmers throughout the Colony. Everywhere there is the same cry. Only a few days ago at the new settlement at Plu. Cane Grove one man said he had many bunches of plantains but it was uneconomical to send them to Georgetown and have to pay for the transportation. I do ask if a lorry from Georgetown cannot be sent up for the produce and so let the farmers get the net prices fixed by Government. I must repeat what I have said before—that the only way the farmers of the country would get any compensation for the rising cost of living is by increasing the prices of their produce.

We ought not to neglect that aspect of the situation, thinking that the people willingly accept the conditions however hard they may be, and are satisfied. I feel I am interpreting fully the feelings of the farmers of this country when I say that they are not satisfied with the prices obtained for their produce. Unless they get an upward revision of those prices, I feel sure that not only would their suffering in respect of the increased cost of living continue, but it will be a source of great discouragement to them. There are other aspects of this particular question which, if I were to go into them, must take some time, but I am not going to take up much more of the time of the Council on the matter.

I must refer to the fact that British Guiana has incurred a great deal of debt already. I know that she has to put through schemes for better and greater development, and so must incur more debt. I feel that whatever be the project the most careful examination of its progress must be made, lest the en-

tire project prove to be uneconomical to the Colony and a burden in some respects.

I venture to say that the Boerasirie project is a worthwhile project provided, as I have said, the utmost care is taken with it. Unless that is done, we would find that it would not serve the hundreds of acres which will be made available to the Colony agriculturally. I hope that it would remain, not only as a service to the already existing sugar area. I am hoping that the Boerasirie project will extend the agricultural pursuits of that area, and also of the area between the Demerara and the Essequibo rivers, so that they will become thriving through the agricultural activities which must take place there. For that to be done, care must be exercised in the distribution of land so that a greater measure of help will be given to the land-hungry people as well as to the agricultural economy of the Colony as a whole. I feel it is necessary for me to mention that because I am satisfied that the people will take up the lands. Therefore, we must see that proper use is made of them. Unless that is done the entire scheme would backfire and become not only a promiscuous agricultural undertaking, but a very expensive project. I do not feel that that should be so, and so I share the hope expressed by the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer in the concluding paragraph of his Budget Statement.

This is the handing-over period. Every Member of this Council sitting around this table and who has been attending the meetings of the Finance Committee and discussing the Budget year after year, must emerge at this stage with a tremendous amount of experience in the way in which Gov-

ernment has been handling the finances of this Colony. If their feeling is that it has not been done in the right way, I feel sure they must automatically have the remedy for the future. If they feel it is a good pattern, then they would keep it. Whatever it is, we are going forward in the future. I am very hopeful of the future, standing on the threshold of the new and the demise of the old Council.

I look upon the work that has been done by this Council in steering the financial affairs of this Colony as one not without some merit, and one that has been productive of much, even if it has not measured up to what several Members would want it to be. Like the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, I would say that we in British Guiana have a future and that with our resources, financial and otherwise, we have great scope for planning and development. In so saying, I can only hope as one of the out-going Members of this Council, for great development and prosperity in the future.

Mr. Fernandes : It is indeed a pleasure at the end of my term of office in this Council to be able to pass out leaving the financial situation of British Guiana in a somewhat better condition than it was when I came five years ago. The conclusion in the hon. the Financial Secretary's Budget Address is one which merits repeating and I am going to repeat it once more so as to have it put on record. It reads thus :

"This Council will bequeath to the new Government and Legislature a sound Financial structure in which there should be room for manoeuvre and scope for planning with, we hope, the technical advice and means by which sound plans may be framed and carried into execution. We of this Council shall do more than this: we shall pass on to our suc-

cessors our own abiding faith in the future of this country and, with that faith, a prayer that with God's blessing and guidance all things may be so ordered as to lead to the happiness and prosperity of all its people."

British Guiana is facing a new Constitution. We need large sums of money for development work of one kind or another. Where we will get the money from will depend largely on what happens three months from now at our General Election. No one would invest money in a business or in a country except he is satisfied that it is going to be properly run, that the persons in whose hands lies the guidance of the destinies of that business or country are capable of doing the job efficiently, and are honest and sincere in their efforts to see that every opportunity which presents itself for the betterment of the country is grasped and not allowed to slip by. The time which Members of this Council can afford to devote to playing to the gallery will come to an end on the 27th of April when the new Council will be elected. After that, responsibility will lie fairly and squarely on the shoulders of those whom the good people of British Guiana decide to place into this Council under the new Constitution. If they place the right people, then I have no doubt that British Guiana will go on from strength to strength, while the economy of the people will improve and their standard of living will go up.

Of course, in any business whatever a lot depends not only on the management but on the workers themselves. We see that in ordinary commercial life certain businesses that are thriving and progressing, use the most modern means to produce whatever they are producing. We find that those very progressive businesses also pay high

wages and still are able to make money. They are able to do that because of their efficient management in the first place, and because of the loyalty and the desire of those who work for them to improve their own condition, realizing that giving of their best is the surest means of improving their condition.

After having served here for five years, I find that I have been able to fulfil everyone of my pre-election promises with the possible exception of one, and that one is that I would try as far as possible to see that sufficient primary schools are made available for every child of school-going age. I did try as hard as possible, but our population is increasing so rapidly that it has not been found possible to keep up with it, and therefore at the present moment we are still slightly behind hand in our school accommodation. But I am sure that every Member of this Council will agree with me when I say that the position in regard to our primary schools is very much better today than it was a few years ago. We have had a terrific amount of school building operations, and even though the position has not come up to expectation I am not ashamed of what has been done in those five years.

I have listened very carefully to the two hon. Members who spoke before me, and I am just going to comment shortly on one or two of the remarks they made. The hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) said that British Guiana has gone "rice mad." There is one thing that can send British Guiana "rice mad", and that is when rice is a paying proposition. No group of persons would go mad after the industry if there is continuous loss of money in producing that article. Nevertheless, the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) came behind

the hon. Member and said that while rice is not a payable proposition the people are forced to produce it. I am bringing the two statements together.

There is one thing I was very pleased about and that is, they both agreed that the world is very hungry and that the people of the world need lots of food. They both agreed also that rice is perhaps the most needed article of food by the millions of people in the East that the hon. Member for Central Demerara referred to. That being so, I am sure everyone will agree that if we concentrate on the production of rice to the detriment of cattle on our coastland, we would be doing nothing more than what is our duty. Cattle can be reared in other parts of British Guiana—in the interior—without any difficulty.

Of course, there is always the question as to whether cattle can pay for the breaking in of entirely new lands, and for having those lands drained and empoldered, etc. I am not going into the details in respect of that, because I maintain that cattle can pay for the breaking in of new lands, but not by using the system which we are accustomed to using here ever since I can remember. The system we use here, as everyone knows, is this: You have 100 acres of land and you just put the cattle on it; when the rains are falling the pasturage is good and the cattle look well but in the dry season the grass dries up and the cattle starve to death. Running on that system, I am sure, it would be impossible for anyone to expand the cattle industry economically, but if it is run on up-to-date methods whereby pasturage is cultivated and minerals placed in the soil, and so on, I have no doubt whatever that we would be able to produce all the beef required for British Guiana and perhaps the British West Indies, without any very serious difficulty.

I have always maintained in this

Council and I do maintain today, that the future prosperity of British Guiana depends very largely on the success or failure of its agriculture. I feel certain that if we are to achieve progress, whoever is responsible for the Government of the future will have to pay far more attention than is being paid presently to our agricultural products. Other industries are also needed, but one must always bear in mind that no industry can be really successful and play a very important part except the country in which it is placed provides a large portion of the raw materials necessary for that industry.

It is no use putting up plans to make needed goods if we have to depend on elsewhere for the raw materials. If we can grow the cotton here to make the yarn, then we can have all the cotton goods required made here. If we cannot, it is not going to be profitable after we have gone to the expense of putting up mills, as they are likely to be out of supply of raw materials or the price demanded for the raw materials may be so high as to make the running of that industry unprofitable.

There is just one little serious disappointment that I have had during my term of office, and that is, I have been unable to get any extension of the very small quantity of roads we have in British Guiana. I have been instrumental, however, in getting Government to decide to put down a short strip of road from the end of the Corentyne Road to Crabwood Creek—about 4 to 5 miles — to enable a rice-growing area to be brought into the Skeldon area. If we did not get that done, it would have meant having to transport all that area's produce by water, and anyone who knows the Corentyne River knows only too well that from the time the crop comes in around October-November, that river becomes very rough and

remains so for quite a long time, until Easter. It would have meant providing crafts to do this bit of transportation. That is all I was able to get in respect of roads.

It is very regrettable that those who have gone before me did not see fit to try to extend our roadways by at least 20 miles a year. But I am not surprised that they did not succeed even if they had tried, because I tried and did not succeed. At the moment our interior is being opened up by air transport. That is good, but only for comparatively medium and high-priced articles. The low-priced articles cannot be produced in the interior and brought to the Coast economically. That means that until we can get road communication we will have to forget the possibility of producing anything else in the interior but medium and high-priced goods.

I was very pleased during my investigation of the Budget to find that Government has at last realized that our Youth Organizations need far more assistance than they got in the past. There are other sources of youth training in the world today that are working contrary to our democratic way of thinking; they absolutely do not need Government finance because, daresay, they know where they can get their finance from. I have had the privilege and pleasure of working with Youth Organizations, and I know that it is very difficult to do the necessary work so that our youths can be brought up law-abiding and respectable — without the habit of using indecent language in public places and without the tendency to do wrong things which are largely responsible for the increase in crime. Which the hon. Member for Central Demerara was very careful to mention a while ago.

I think that is a step in the right direction, and I hope those

who come behind us in the new Council will follow along those lines and apply every means available to assist those voluntary organizations which are undoubtedly doing a very excellent job among our youths. On their behalf I would like to thank Government very much.

The question of the shortage of available lands is undoubtedly a very important one, but I am sure it can be met and that everyone who will cultivate the land properly can get sufficient land in British Guiana. I must confess that Government has paid practically no attention whatever to making the lands in the hands of the farmers produce more. All over the world, the land is being made to produce more and more by scientific means, but here we have paid practically no attention to that. I can quite understand that it has been handed down from generation to generation. There is so much land that the farmer is accustomed to take 10 acres, burn down the bush, cultivate it for a year or two and then leave it abandoned and take another 10 acres. By the time he has got to the third 10 acres the first 10 acres is taken over with bush to enable him to burn it down and cultivate the land again. That has always hindered our development in agriculture and has always increased the cost of production to our farmers.

I notice that the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has stressed very strongly the point that the prices of ground provisions should be considerably increased so that the farmers can earn more money. He says the increased cost of living is what has made it necessary for the prices of their products to be increased. I wonder if he has ever stopped to think that the increase in the prices of those products will carry up the cost of living to others who do not cultivate the

land. It would have been very much better if by now we knew what manure should be put into the land to enable it to produce more economically, and so enable the products to be sold at lower prices than at present and still leave a margin of profit in the hands of those who toil to grow those products.

I have also noted the desire on the part of Members to borrow large sums of money—millions and millions of dollars. It sounds very nice, but it is dishonest for anyone to borrow money if he cannot find any means or he sees no likelihood of ever being able to repay that money, or even to pay the interest thereon. It is wrong to do that. It is very right and correct to borrow money for development, if you have a very good chance of making a success of the development you have in mind and to repay the loan over a period of years, twenty or so. I look to the future with mixed feelings but, knowing the people of British Guiana as I do, I know that whenever they are put to a test similar to the one they are going to face in the not too distant future, they do what is right in their own interest. Some people think they are foolish, but I do not.

I have great confidence in their sense of judgment, and therefore I feel that they will put back into this Council under the new Constitution, persons who will not fool them and who will not make promises they know they can never fulfil. That is like borrowing money and not knowing how you are going to repay it. It is equally dishonest. It is absolutely dishonest for any person to stand on an election platform and make promises, knowing full well it is impossible to fulfil them. I am sure that persons of that kind will be given short shrift when they start to promise the sun and the moon. They may, however, promise rain and very likely ful-

fil that. That is why I maintain that drainage is more important than irrigation. We can very well depend on natural irrigation.

Speaking on irrigation and drainage, I have seen the Government of this country very severely criticized when there were floods which caused some losses to the poor people. Perhaps some of the criticisms were justified, but I wonder if Members realize that even with our poor drainage how safe we are. For the past few days every news bulletin and every newspaper has been mentioning an increasing number of persons who have lost their lives in floods, hundreds of square-miles of farmlands having been devastated through floodings; and that happened in some of the most up-to-date countries in the world. There has been loss of lives in England, in France and in Holland particularly, and practically throughout Western Europe. That only goes to show that when we have our little flood troubles here from time to time, we should realize that we could have been worse off. At the same time, we must put our shoulders to the wheel and lend Government all the assistance we can in order to prevent the same serious trouble in the future. We have many new projects on the coastlands which Government hopes will make thousand of acres of land available for cultivation.

But again, sir, before I come to the end of my term of office here I would like to remind Government that it should not neglect the lands on the banks of our rivers. Every day I see signs that these lands can produce what some people may think impossible. I have been doing a very small amount of experimenting myself, in order to satisfy myself that our river lands will respond to up-to-date methods of paturage, as well as those in any country in the world, not excluding

New Zealand. I have been told several times that I have New Zealand on my brain. Maybe, being one who has always been a farmer at heart, even though conditions do not permit me to take it up as a livelihood. It needs a large amount of capital, which I do not have, to break in land, and I have too large a family to take a chance in going in for very much pioneering work. But I hope in the not too distant future to do some pioneering work myself, and I shall encourage my children to try it before they start on the serious side of life, that is, the raising of a family. I hope that in future Government would make more and more facilities available to everyone who wants to leave the City and return to the land.

During the last five years there has been, undoubtedly, a flow of persons coming into the City from off the land in the country. It has had a very serious effect. Only this morning I happened to be sitting on a Committee examining applications for employment as Nurses at the Almshouse, and I was not surprised when I was told that at least 200 applications per month are received for approximately two or three jobs a year. By that, Government should see that the unemployment problem, particularly among girl leaving school, is a very difficult one, and I hope one that the new Government Ministers — the Minister of Labour and perhaps the Minister of Social Welfare — will find means of getting these girls some employment. The hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer can bear me out when I say that there is one section of the Social Welfare Department which I have always supported very strongly. I have done so under its present system and I will always do so as long as it remains, and that is the section dealing with Cottage Industries. They are doing a very fine job in enabling the

young people of the countryside to make things like jellies and other products which are readily sold in the City and which, I have no doubt, will find a reasonably good export market. That is the one branch of the Social Welfare Department I would like to see reared several times. I daresay we have to move slowly, but I must admit that Government has sometimes moved too slowly to my liking.

Only today, in the reply to my questions, Government stated that the transport of land at Campbellville will be done soon, or words to that effect. That was told to me in this Council very nearly a year ago. It does not take us any further. The people in Campbellville are no wiser. "As soon as possible" may mean a month or five years, because it is as soon as possible by anybody else but Government. And Government may not find it possible to do things as early as other people. I do hope that is something that will be achieved before this Council passes out of office, and that the people of Campbellville will have the opportunity of owning their lots before 1953 comes to a close.

I hope also that the roads will be greatly improved between now and then. There is no question about it, they are in a shocking state and with the recent excessive rains the position has not been made any easier. According to Government's reply the money received from the rent of the lots will be spent on the road but if we have to wait on the receipt of that money before it is spent on the roads, one can well see that those roads are not likely to be done before some time in the middle of the year. I hate to think what their condition would be by then, if what is allowed—

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: Will the hon. Member allow

me? It is true in that answer it is said that the money received from the rents will be devoted to the maintenance and upkeep of the estate including the repair of roads and bridges, but that does not mean that the Department concerned will wait for the actual cash to be in hand to do the work. As a matter of fact, the money is provided in the Estimates so that the Department will be able to get ahead and spend money on the necessary work without actually waiting to get the money in cash from the rents.

Mr. Fernandes: I thank the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer very much. He has eased my mind, because I had promised the people very nearly a year ago to do everything possible to get the roads fixed. I have made every effort at my disposal to get them done and I am really a little bit disappointed that more has not been done. I really expected some money to be spent some time last year out of last year's revenue.

Mr. Farnum: At this juncture may I just rise to make an explanation?

Mr. Fernandes: I am on the floor. I leave the matter with that assurance of Government that everything will be put in order and that these people's suffering will be put to an end. As this is the last time I will have the opportunity to speak on the Budget when nearly everything that is necessary can be said, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Administration for the many acts of kindness it has shown to me in respect of matters which I have had occasion to bring forward. I would not like to end on a wrong note, but I do not think Members of this Council are always given the treatment which they should be given. Now, sir, over a year ago I moved a motion in this Council. It went through without division. I was given a series of assurances that it would be gone into rightaway. The simple question I asked was "What is Government's intention on this matter?" We

all know that in February we got an answer which had nothing to do with the motion which was passed more than a year ago. I refer to the motion calling for an increase in the fee for a lorry licence between the Berbice and the Demerara rivers.

I know that great hardship is being experienced by the rice industry because nothing has been done since then. I happen to know that the Advisory Committee to the Authority which deals with this matter decided by a majority decision that the motion should be implemented. Yet we find that over a year after the motion was unanimously passed nothing has been done. That is not good enough. It does appear that the motion which was moved by me and fully debated, was so much a waste of time. I think it is only proper that hon. Members of this Council should try to work in accordance with the Rules of the Constitution. Government should know that when certain hon. Members of this Council ask certain questions, they have a very good idea of what the answer would be. I am very disappointed to find that Government after a year and one month and in reply to a question relating to that motion, has made a statement which is not absolutely correct and which tended to mislead hon. Members.

I shall soon pass out of this Council, and do not know whether I will be here under the next Constitution. But I know that I am not going to be able to work in this Council after the end of February, as I have previously given notice that I am going to apply for some leave. If I do not, I will not be able to work at my best for this Council and the various Government committees plus my own business, and at the same time carry on my election campaign—a vital service which I owe to the people and their interest. My health will go and perhaps I may not be able to serve in

the future as well as the people would like me to. I cannot pass out without letting Government know at least that when these things are done they are quite wrong.

Mr. Luckhoo: A few years ago, in this very Council Chamber when I was first admitted, I remember referring to the Budget Speech and quoting from Burke: "To tax and to please no more than to love and be wise is not given to man . . ." I little thought then that occasion would have arisen for me to rise and admit that this quotation had proved false. This is an occasion when we may say that the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has pleased us, and pleased the taxpayers and everybody in his statement of taxation for 1953. Sir, in the history of the Colony this Budget declaration, I venture to suggest, will stand out for all time as a singular instrument of the prosperity and the economic stability of the country. In this Budget address, we find not only that there is no increased or new taxation, but that we actually have a remission of taxation.

I have endeavoured to find out whether there has been any other period in the history of the Colony when any Financial Secretary ever presented a like Budget which contained these particular features—no increase in taxation and additional benefit in remission. I am told authoritatively, sir, that that has never been done, and that this Budget is singular in that respect. I think we all will join in congratulating our Financial Secretary and Treasurer most heartily on this Budget. It will stand out for all time as an instrument recording the prosperity and the economic stability of the Colony. The hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has referred to his abiding faith in the future of this Colony. One does not have to look far

to find that, because in this very survey of what the Colony has done during 1952, we find progress all along the line — progress which can only mean the advancement of the country.

Let us examine some of the realms within which there has been this progress. In bauxite the export was a matter of some 2.3 million tons which, if I remember correctly, included 144,000 tons of calcined ore. That showed a remarkable increase as compared with 1951. In the rice crop the yield was a matter of 70,000 tons—a very effective increase as compared with 1951. In timber and lumber there was a record production of 4.5 million cubic feet, as compared with 3.8 million cubic feet in 1951. All along the line we see progress recorded in production, thus opening the door to the Colony's future. Let us go on further to sugar. Forexample, we find that there has been an increase from 217,000 tons in 1951 to a matter of 242,000 in 1952. The target set was only 230,000 tons and that was estimated to be a record high level.

But, sir, if I may, I would take this opportunity to make mention of something which I have said before and which I would like to reiterate here. Some 30,000 sugar workers are today enjoying benefits they never before enjoyed in this Colony. They are experiencing a new lease on life and earning, sizeable sums, but it is very upsetting to find people deliberately mis-stating the case for the sugar workers with respect to the recent increases, such as we saw in a publication today in one of the daily newspapers. Sir, it is disappointing that I have today to make mention of this distortion of facts with respect to the increases granted by the Sugar Producers Association, after negotiations lasting some weeks with the Trade Unions bargaining on behalf of the workers.

It was estimated that there should be a matter of some \$1 million extra coming into the pool, so to speak, because of the increase in the price of sugar. That increase would only take care of some 160,000 tons, and the remainder of the sugar would have to be sold at competitive prices in a market in which the price has dropped. Consequently, that would affect the gross total increase. The whole of that amount of \$1 million has been handed over by the employers to the workers in the sugar estates. I hold no brief for the employers but, nevertheless, whenever there is an act of that kind which, to my mind, is an act of generosity for the co-operation of the workers because of satisfaction and loyalty in service, I must mention it.

Yet, today we find in the newspapers the statement that the Sugar Producers would not be called upon to spend one penny of that money, when in fact they have given the whole sum over to the workers. I will go even further. Because in the fall of the sugar market and because the increase was not only affecting the wages earned per week, but also all the bonuses, everything also went up and it means that the Sugar Producers will almost probably be called upon to push their hands into their pockets and meet the deficiency of amounts spent in excess of that \$1 million in wages.

I mention that because credit must be given where it is due and whatever might have been said about the past, the Sugar Producers are making a conscientious effort to help the workers. That does not reflect my personal opinion, but the opinion of workers. And that reminds me that I received a letter from a factory worker at Blairmont—I would like with your permission, sir, to read one or two

short sentences of that letter—in which the worker said:

"Since our great ancestors came to British Guiana it is more than a hundred years, and never in the history of Blairmont have workers got such benefits as that they are receiving today. The workers are very proud of the way they are experiencing and enjoying the blessings they are getting out of the sugar estates."

These remarks came from the people who are working in the industry, and since they received their bonuses at the end of the year. They have begun to realize that it pays dividends to work for the prosperity of an industry, because in that prosperity their own prosperity must necessarily be reflected.

Let us move off from the sugar industry in which there were tangible increases. Gold during 1952 showed an increased production of some 5,000 ounces more than in the preceding year. Again our external trade was some \$170 million. This showed an increase of \$47 million over 1951. That \$170 million was made up of imports — \$88 million and exports — \$82 million, including some \$13 million for machinery. This is a very significant sum, when one realises that machinery coming into this Colony is very necessary for the proper development of the Colony.

Sir, in complimenting the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, one has to compliment the Administration as a whole for handing over to the new Council such stability and a set-up whereby they might start with a plus and not with a negative sign to their credit. This is a time when hon. Members are allowed the freedom of making random excursions from one subject to another, and if I may be permitted to make certain observations in respect of certain Departments, I would wish to take this opportunity to do so.

Critically, sir, the Medical Department is one which I feel has not come up to expectation. Our hospital in Georgetown, to my mind, presents a problem which has not been tackled successfully. For a long time one heard of the new Surgical block. Whether it is still an idea or something *in esse* I do not know, but what we look forward to is to hearing that the idea has been implemented.

The setting up of this new surgical block is something which could be done without any enormous expense. Again, the ward called the V.D. Ward is now wedged between two other surgical wards having regard to their relation to infectious diseases. All the patients with non-infectious diseases use the same lavatories and other requirements and conveniences as those with infectious diseases. This was brought to my attention while I was making some enquiries into the administration and I found that nothing had been done about it. In addition, where there are infectious diseases which should be kept apart and which the doctors have so recommended, one finds no physical features of segregation but a mere lettering on the wall which divides one section from another, as if the bugs had reached such a state of intellectual advancement as not to cross from the infectious to the non-infectious section, because of the difference in the lettering of the wards. Surely physical separation is a necessity and should be observed.

Under the Head "Law Officers," I would wish to pay a personal — and I feel the whole Council will agree with me — tribute and thanks to the hon. the Attorney General for the indefatigable services he rendered during last year and at all times, and particularly in the year 1952 when a record number of Bills and other legislation were passed in this very Chamber. It is his re-

sponsibility to see that Bills are brought before us here so that legislation might be enacted, and he has done excellent work which reflects his industry. Sir, his is a position in this Colony which I cannot essay to fill. It must be a most difficult position to be dealing with the business of the Legislative Council and at the same time to be head of the Legal Department. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the records I would like to know how many Bills were passed during last year. I do know, sir, that in labour legislation the number of Bills was a record one, and I feel that the total of all Bills presented in 1952 must constitute an all-time record.

Then, sir there are other Departments which contribute to the smooth and efficient running of the machinery of Government. If I may be permitted, I desire to express a very high and strong personal regard for you, sir, as our President. I may cite one instance which I shall always recall with much feeling — your deep concern at the time when the Berbice Company was closed down and when hundreds of families were left almost in a position of being stranded 160 miles up river, away from the town of New Amsterdam. I remember approaching Your Excellency and receiving your most sympathetic hearing and earnest consideration, followed by your ready action. Sir, it was at your instance that a ship, within a matter of a day, left Georgetown and brought those families down to New Amsterdam. I went to meet them and saw the wives, husbands, and children and they all asked me to express the one thought which I did in public, and that was to say thanks and to express their deep gratitude to Your Excellency for your deep concern and your ready assistance.

Sir, the progress of this Colony lies not only in the future but in the present because, as the hon. Member for George-

town Central has said, what is going to happen within the next few weeks will determine very largely just how rapid our advancement would be. I have sufficient faith to believe that, irrespective of what the results are, this country will still keep on plodding forward and onwards to a more speedy progress. That would only be, however, if a sane, reasonable and sensible Government is returned at the coming elections. Sir, it seems to me that the people of the country, the workers, are getting wise to what the position is. I hope that I am right.

It seems to me that a year ago there was more confusion in their minds, but today a very powerful blow has been struck against those who are disorganising society and that blow has been a telling one. It has been so telling that within recent days, in an effort to resuscitate the group and build up Dutch courage, those individuals have been seen wearing red berets and flaming red ties, and button-holes bearing Stalin's picture. I have seen that with my own eyes. It is curious to know that the individuals who are wearing this very flamboyant dress and other "question mark" decorations, are the very individuals who nearly always resort to a certain amount of personal violence to create a state of disorder.

So, sir, I say in all seriousness that the future one faces is a future which is bright and which is attractive. Like the honourable the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, I feel that in this country there is a future. I think I should mention this: When I was in Trinidad recently, while speaking to one of the Ministers there I was asked what British Guiana produces. I was making mention of a few things in reply when he said to me "I agree with you but you omit one of your best productions." "That is what?" I retorted, and he replied

"Not 'what', but 'who'." I then said "That is who?" and he replied "That is your Financial Secretary". That was said in Trinidad about six months ago. Like Sir Charles, I have abounding and abiding faith in the future.

I feel I share the opinion of the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) that the people themselves will begin to realize and continue to realize that whatever words have been spoken are merely spoken, and whatever promises are made remain, very simply, promises. It is what is done that matters; it is what one achieves that matters. When they look and see what has been achieved for this Colony -- the progress made with bauxite, rice, timber, lumber, sugar and gold over the past year—then, sir, they must surely appreciate that it is a step-up which will inspire confidence. And from confidence there must necessarily come a future and the further progress of our country.

Sir, there is much more I can say, but I propose to take my seat. I would like however, once again as a very small, very insignificant and very humble member of the community, to say, —like the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, like yourself, sir, and like those of us who have stood forward for the stability of this country, — that this country has a great and prosperous future if those who are to control its destiny are not misled by those whose main purpose and aim are to create disorder and confusion. Sir, it has been often termed as "witch hunting". It is not. Day after day one sees tangible and yet more tangible signs of foreign influence attempting to dominate and control our country. Sir, it has been held against me that I stood forward and brought up the motion for the suppression and keeping out of subversive literature. I say I do wish it will go further.

I wish that in this country we could outlaw Communism, because it is only a chocolate-coated poison which is served up in small doses to bring about the doom and subjugation of this country. Let those who believe in that particular ideology go to Russia. Why did not those men who were sentenced in the U.S.A. for communistic activities, when offered the opportunity to go to Russia as an alternative to going to prison, take it and go there? No; they refused; they did not wish to go back to Russia. One can be a Socialist or a Leftist as much as possible, but as far as I am concerned I am prepared to support any such reasonable thought or action against foreign domination, or Red domination, or influence of the Comintern coming into our country. I speak for myself. I am prepared to fight against them, and I say in all sincerity that I wish that something could be done in this Legislature, some legislation enacted, to outlaw communism in this country. When that happens, another blow will have been struck for the good of mankind.

Mr. Farnum: In a few months' time this Government will be handing over, and I think it will have every satisfaction in knowing that it is handing over to what I may term its successors, a country whose finances are absolutely sound. I think the Government must feel very pleased about it. I would like to associate myself with what the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has said, because in his position as Financial Adviser to the Government, I know he has put checks on Government in certain directions, and I think he must feel very proud that he is able to hand over the finances of the country in such a sound condition. I do not think it is necessary to say anything further in respect of the Budget because, after all, the new Government will be taking charge and will

have all the problems to solve. But I do hope that the new Government will give attention to the opening up of the country, especially the interior, by means of roads, because I believe that is the way in which the country will have to be opened up and the national income of the people thereby considerably increased.

While speaking on the question of the new Constitution, I would like to direct Government's attention to what we were told a few days ago on the East Coast of Demerara and the West Coast, Berbice. It is that a very large number of the people, in fact a very large portion of the population, do not understand the implications of the new Constitution. I pointed out to them that the B.P.I. had been broadcasting every Sunday — half an hour each time for a number of months — what the Constitution stood for and what were its implications. But they pointed out to me that very few persons in those districts owned radio receiving sets, that Sunday was a day of rest and that in order to hear a broadcast they had to travel miles, which they were not prepared to do. I bring that to the attention of Government because it is widespread that the people do not understand the implications of the new Constitution.

With respect to Campbellville and the reply given by Government to the hon. Member for Georgetown Central relative to the sale of the lots, as a member of the Central Authority I would like to say that the question of the price of the lots at Campbellville has been decided and in a very short time the people will be asked to come forward and either pay for the lots or tell the Central Authority under what conditions or terms they are able to purchase them. But there should be no fear—I think Government has given

the assurance—that those persons who are occupying lots will be turned off the land. They will be allowed to purchase, by some means or other, the lots on which they are settled. I would like to say further that the Central Authority has some very great problems in connection with Campbellville to solve. I think the hon. Member for Georgetown Central knows that, because he happened to have been a member of that Authority, and perhaps those problems were so great that he thought it wise to resign. Perhaps that is why he has resigned from the Central Authority.

Mr. Fernandes : To a point of order ! It is wrong for the hon. Member to make that statement. He should remember the reason for my resigning from the Central Authority. It was because Government had shown distrust of the Authority. I did not resign because I was afraid of any problem. I have never done so in my life.

Mr. Farnum : The hon. Member knows very well that the Central Authority had very great problems and still has very large problems to solve in connection with Campbellville. I do think Government made a mistake in not creating a local authority there, because those people would have realized thereby what it costs to build roads and provide drainage for a large area such as that — a place which was neglected by its past owners. A road has been constructed there and the Central Authority has spent a large sum of money in building that road. They asked the Public Works Department to give an estimate for the building of another road in Campbellville and that estimate, so far as my recollection goes, was \$1½ million. I would advise Government that that is the best course out of this difficulty. I do not see how the Central Authority can build roads at Campbellville when

they have no technical staff and no equipment to do it. I know, as a matter of fact, that they tried to get the Public Works Department to lend them their equipment but were unsuccessful, as the Public Works Department had their own work to perform and could not spare their equipment. The only solution is to create a local authority at Campbellville and let the people, through the local authority, borrow the money from Government and see what it costs to build roads.

Dr. Jagan : Can the hon. Member tell us what the price is ?

Mr. Peters : It is well for us in the life of this Council to take the opportunity of examining ourselves in the light of the path we have trodden within these five years. In doing so, when we consider the state of affairs, social, economic, financial and otherwise that we hope to pass on to the next Council—whether any or all of us might have the privilege of being there—we cannot but feel that we have succeeded in doing the best we could in the interest of this land of ours. In the first place, we must commend ourselves for the splendid physical health that we have all maintained in the course of these years. To-day one of our number is ill, and in the course of the years one has passed out by the hand of death.

In the first instance, our sympathy goes out to the Hon. J. T. Thompson, and in the second instance to the relatives of the late Hon. Cramat Alli McDoom, who died. This shows that Members of Council are certainly in very good health. I wish we will all keep healthy in bodies and healthy in mind, and as we have come to the hour when we shortly must hand over to another Council the burden that has been ours to carry during these

years, we cannot but give thanks to Almighty God for the health we have had in order to perform our duties as well as we have tried to do them. I am sure, sir, it would not be fulsome for me to extend the heartiest congratulations so richly deserved to our colleague, the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer of this Colony. Time and again he has certainly had the occasion to take us out, shall I say, into what appeared to be very deep waters in matters affecting finances of the Colony. Time and again we sat and listened to the fullest explanations from him as to the whys and wherefores of his propositions. Time and again, shall I say, we have shocked him into thinking that we were distrustful of his propositions. But with the long suffering and enduring patience which certainly went with all the happiest features of his personality, he had been able to bring us round to see his point of view in that particular matter. When the hour came to take the count he certainly was satisfied and enjoyed the compensation in that last analysis, of the majority of those who sat around the table in Finance Committee with him. And so we can say to him two words—"Well Done."

And then moreover, the Council as a whole — if I may be pardoned for remarking upon it — has, in the course of these years, behaved itself most decorously. Never has there been any boisterous session taking place in this Council. We knew how to agree and how to disagree, we knew how to give and take, and we knew how to accept defeat with a spirit of complete resignation. If we were disposed to take a cursory glance on the path over which we have come these many years, we would see that we have come along well.

One of the dominant industries of our Colony is the bauxite industry. Others are gold, diamond, rice, sugar and tim-

ber to which the hon. the Sixth nominated Member (Mr. Luckhoo) has already referred. It certainly is refreshing for us to look over these industries again and to see and say, by and large, that we have left them in a far healthier condition than that in which we found them when we began to work in this Council Chamber five years and more ago. In the course of these years there have been matters of importance, in many respects monumental importance. When we began our work here, British Guiana could not boast of that very excellent building with its architectural features and otherwise—the General Post-Office which, certainly, is a matter of great pride to the citizens of the Colony when we compare it with other buildings which serve as G.P.O. buildings in other parts of the Caribbean area. Then, sir, we have begun to establish what is known as our Technical Institute. It has been no secret that I have been one of the most chary Members of this Council about the establishment of that Institute. I cannot as yet say that I have been able to delude myself of that chariness but, so far as I am concerned, it certainly has my benediction for a happy and successful future.

In the course of these years, sir, we have been able to embark upon big and sometimes very delicate propositions like the setting up of the Decanting Centre which we have hopes will be a great relief to the population whom we hope to remove from our slum areas. **We believe in the long run that after we shall have experienced some trials and errors, we have good reasons to be justly proud that we decided during the life of this Council to embark upon that big and very necessary proposition.** Then, of course, in these years we have had another big proposition, and that is the building of a number of schools which will make life far happier from its utilitarian value in the

education of our children. The improvements we have made from the point of view of ventilation and even structural reform, were not seen in our school buildings a generation ago.

Then, sir, we have, so far as the materials allowed, set up various schemes throughout the land so that our village dwellers might be blessed with some pipe-borne potable water. We had the distressing experience of an outbreak of typhoid fever in the village of Bush Lot, West Coast, Berbice, and when I went and made my personal investigations, I discovered that the epidemic had not overtaken the people who lived near the roadside, because the pipe-borne water was not far from their homes. Those who suffered from the physical effects of the epidemic were those who lived a long way from the public road and who found it difficult to go out and get pipe-borne water. In their ignorance, so to say, they made use of all the water in the trenches which by that time may have been infested with whatever disease came from the sewerage, and in the long run the epidemic broke out in that area.

I brought the serious situation to the attention of the Director of Medical Services, who was certainly aware of it and made another serious declaration that a few children from the Essequibo Coast who had gone to Bush Lot spending time with their relatives in that part of the village not by the roadside, had contracted typhoid fever and carried it back to their home area on the Essequibo Coast. Fortunately, the epidemic passed off without any serious result. This certainly indicates the serious need for an improved system of water being conducted to the back lands, so that the people living in those areas might be protected from such incidents in the future.

Now, sir, one has to think of what

has happened in the course of these years as regards the vital statistics of our Colony. There is no doubt that the health conditions as a whole of the people in this Colony are immensely important. What we enjoy today is the happy bequest or legacy of the care exercised by previous generations not only of the Legislature, but also of the Medical set-up in our Colony. What is after all most important is that our population during the past 9 or 10 years has increased at the rate of 10,000 per year. That certainly is a challenge to us in this Council, and we should see to it that the population keeps ever increasing over the waste space in this land of ours. There are too many waste spaces which in process of time can be filled by a larger population than what we have in this Colony at present.

Passing from these features, one has to think of one aspect today—something which is now an historical fact—the Rice Development Company which is to operate in this Colony of ours. There was a time when members of this Council were not seeing eye to eye with the Government and opposed most strenuously the recommendations presented to us to have the Colonial Development Corporation come in and take hold, shall I say, of the rice scheme in a certain way, separate and apart from the influence and control of the Rice Marketing Board. That is what individuals were heard saying here and there—around this table and elsewhere—against a proposition of that kind. Time came when the Council assembled here, each man as it were with blood in his eyes, determined to oppose such a proposition.

One might be pardoned for it but we must extend heartiest congratulations and the highest praise and appreciation of His Excellency Sir Charles Woolley who, one afternoon, I remember, sensing very quickly what was the cause

of the strongest opposition to that idea, adjourned the Council, dismissed the Press and the gallery, and himself came down from his seat and had a heart-to-heart talk with Council as a whole, and by exchanging ideas was able to sail us out of the *cul de sac*. He eventually led us to the easy acceptance of this reasonable proposition of setting-up the Rice Development Company as it is today and which we have cause to believe—I personally think so—will be a great and unspeakable boon to the welfare and general well-being of the people of this country.

Then again, there is no doubt that we are making serious effort in providing facilities for the educational advancement for our school children and we must face up to the fact that we have not been able to house them as adequately as we might. But it is the determination of Council that with the passing of time, all the children of our land in the primary schools will have the benefit of being adequately housed. More money is being spent today for the education of our children, and as the population increases greater demands will be made upon the purse-strings of the Colony. Knowing the mind and temper of our people as well as I do, I have no reason to doubt that there will be continuous effort on the part of the citizenry of this land to see that the children are given an adequate education, especially in the age of their primary existence in this Colony.

Then, in the course of the life of this Council we have been bold enough to launch and maintain a Co-operative Movement of which we have cause to be justly proud, and which we hope in the long run is going to be of valuable service to the people of our country. If I may be allowed to pass on from that to the agricultural prospects and purposes of our country, we have to give a mead of praise to the Agricultural Depart-

ment for everything tried. When I say the Agricultural Department, I mean also the setting-up of the effort to improve the structure, and shall I say achievements of the Department as such, in order that the agricultural outlook of our land might be improved. But I desire still to call attention to the fact that while we have, during these past years and before, spoken rather seriously about the wisdom of establishing a sound scheme of irrigation and drainage, we have over-looked that other something which certainly calls for serious thought and, shall I say, serious implementation. I am not going to attempt to preach a sermon but at least will quote the text: "What is in thy hand . . ."

We have places in this country of ours where Mother Nature has taken care of both of these problems — the problem of irrigation and the problem of drainage. I can refer particularly to at least one place, not to mention others—Fort Island which stands high across and above the level of the River even when it is at high tide. There, Nature takes care of both of these problems of irrigation and drainage, because the ground in that island is so high that there is never any danger of flooding, and because also the island is surrounded with fresh water for about 9 to 10 months of the year—a very advantageous thing when there is a drought. And so Fort Island has a facility—shall I say amenity, that is a very fruitful agricultural asset.

If we had other places of a similar character and made use of them, or got them purchased cheaply, we will be moving along the right direction. I am happy to state that some of the choicest bunches of plantains, some of the most luscious grape fruit, have come from this island. The people who live there pursue a very

quiet, and lucrative industry, disposing of their agricultural goods six days of the week through the daily market so far as the steamer is concerned. But I will seriously recommend that some encouragement be given these people by the erection of some proper marketing place for them to dispose of their agricultural produce.

And now sir, let us pass on to the question of our roads. There is no doubt about the necessity that we should do all that lies in our power to encourage the village denizen, but while we are cherishing this dream and idea and belief, we are still neglectful of some of the roads. For the moment I am referring to the roads which run parallel to and on either sides of the Demerara River. These roads are in a horrible condition and the bridges connecting them are very hazardous to cross, some of them cannot bear the strain of crossing vehicles. It is certainly distressing that the precarious condition of the bridges at Vreed-en-Stein Potosi and Maria's Lodge, along the West Bank of the River, to mention a few, prevent parents from being able to respond to the Education Officer's appeal to send their children to school. When the water in the trenches below the bridges is low, crossing is possible, but at high tide it is nearly up to the waist. One can thus see how hazardous are the conditions for parents who allow their children to cross such bridges. Every effort should therefore be made as early as possible, to see that the people who live near the river banks are given better roads and bridges over which to cross.

On the question of juvenile delinquency, what we have learned in these days to tolerate is the destroying of the morals of our boys and girls. I called attention not so long ago to the fact that the Colony is suffering from a super-

abundance of one-patterned homes, the reason for which is not too far to see. where a mother has to take care of her house and a room full of children. Now, that mother has to struggle to keep her boy or girl going to school from Monday to Friday, and then prepare his clothing for school every Saturday that he might get to school on Monday. She is not going to allow him to use that same school clothes just prepared, to run around on Saturday and Sunday, as they would not be clean enough for him or her to attend school on Monday morning. And so Sunday remains a day when the children are kept in clothes not so tidy, and when one sees them caring little about their dress, it is because their personal pride and decency is being destroyed and they are given to roaming about seeking money to orientate their hope and spirit.

One of the important aspects in juvenile delinquency is the way to approach these children who are in our midst and who get very little to help them re-orientate their spirit. I call this to the attention of Government because I feel it my duty to let Government know that the ordinary child finds it very difficulty to adjust himself to society, and so our Juvenile Courts are literally filled with boys and girls nearly every Saturday morning. We have to address our minds to what we in this Council, or the other Council, are going to do to take care of this problem of juvenile delinquency.

One last word. We have found ourselves wise to the folly of having no Police Station — an instrument of restraint — in the city of Georgetown south of Brickdam. The old Charles-town Guard House which gave service as a means of restraint for more than 50 years has been closed. It seems as if somebody thought it wise to close it down in order to make room

for a fire brigade, and as a result crime has developed seriously in that area. The newspapers will tell us that for the past two months there were no fewer than two murders committed in that area. I plead with Government and this Council that everything in their power should be done to retain that Guard House and restore a group of Police there to facilitate means of restraint. As we hand over our portfolio, let us hope that we will go out feeling that we have done our best, and wish the new Council God's blessing for the best to come.

Mr. Macnie: Sir, I would like to join those who complimented and congratulated the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer. Firstly, I would like to refer to that part of his Budget Statement which, I think, is of extreme importance. It states:

"While there has been no decline in employment as a whole, there has been indications of a slight increase in unemployment due, of course, to the fact that the total labour force continued to grow." That is one, if not the major problems, of this country today."

The population is growing and the sources of employment will not be able to keep pace with that growth. In fact, today it is generally recognised that efficiency in industry is achieved by mechanisation, and improvement of the standard of living is achieved by the employment of an efficient but small labour force. I know that in the face of the keen competition which all industries are having throughout the world today, they cannot afford to use surplus employees. I feel that those words are not only true but that is one of the biggest problems to which the new form of government should immediately address itself. The solution might be found in new industries, but that is only true up to a point. I feel

that the solution is to be found in the development of land which that surplus or growing labour force can be settled on and can occupy itself beneficially. Indeed the sugar industry has, during the past two or three years, broken all former records. I say, and as the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has said also, that reflects the greatest credit on management and workers alike. This improvement is in a large measure due to improved methods in the field and factory activities, and to good relationship and co-operation between the worker and the employer.

I would like to refer to what I regard as the most important words in the Budget Statement from the point of view of the future for those who would be coming after us in the new House of Assembly. I refer to where the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer dealt with Budget policy and general financial considerations. The words I wish to underline are those which state that —

"Our need now is to preserve the Colony's financial integrity and stability and demonstrate that it is a good risk for the investment of new capital to promote the development of its potential resources."

That need to preserve the Colony's financial integrity and political stability is now. I feel that if the people of this Colony can approach the coming elections with that in their minds, they need have no fear whatever of the future.

Mr. Smellie: I join with other hon. Members of Council in congratulating the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer on his exceptional Budget, and I do hope that he will continue to guide the financial destiny of the Colony for many years to come. The hon. the

Financial Secretary and Treasurer has his own technique, and I have a faint suspicion that he goes about it deliberately, underestimating revenue. I think that is the explanation because what has puzzled me for several years is, when we get into Finance Committee and a whole spate of supplementary estimates come up, they are passed. Yet in spite of all these, the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer is still able to show a surplus balance. For this year, the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has stated that there will be a surplus of \$771,906. I regard that sum as being a very small margin in view of the enormous totals of supplementary estimates which come before the Finance Committee.

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: I know that Members will not expect me to reply, but I would like to say that I wanted to congratulate the Council on the extremely high level and tone of the debate. I can say that the Council has, during that period, risen to very great heights and I am sure it can compare favourably with any other legislative body in this area. I thank Members for the very kind words of commendation about me, personally — words which I accept with humility, and with a deep sense of pride and satisfaction. The debate will go down in record, as one Member has said, not only as a sort of valediction, but also as a record of the sentiments, the hopes, the wishes and the exhortation of Members. I beg to move that the second reading of the Bill be now taken.

The Attorney General: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

The President: Council will now adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, February 5, at 2 p.m.